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Big Beaver Creek, Aug. 8, 1920.

Chapter 2nd. Worse than the first.

Arrived here on the afternoon of the 6th from camp on the Little Beaver Creek, on the opposite side of the hill. Everyone, including the horses, were rather weary as the day was hot and the trail dusty.

We camped in a large clearing in the woods known as the old McMillan ranch, with a fine garden of vegetables just ready to pick, to which we have done full justice. A small stream with several beaver ponds are close by, while the willows are lively with birds - the best locality we have struck yet. Among others we noted the Vaux Swift, Yellow-throats, Alaska Three-toed Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwings, Nighthawks, both Jays, etc., and among mammals we took Streater's Weazel, Jumping Mouse (*Microtus*), Pine Squirrels, Chipmunks, Shrews, etc.

The second day one of the owners of the place dropped in on us, and brought some "wild cat" meat, as there is no closed season on this animal, which looked like venison and tasted like venison.

Ed. Smith, a crazy inmate of the Sedro Wooley asylum, who had just escaped, took dinner with us on the Little Beaver on the 5th. The next day we found that his camp fire had set the forest on fire. We put this out; but there is another fire going somewhere on the back trail, - which we are sure is not ours, so we are laying it on "Crazy Smith."

In the way of high lights along the way, I might add that the hornets claim the right of way along the trail, and when our string of horses pass their hang-outs, there is something doing. On one occasion, being the last of the string, my horse stepped into a particularly hot bunch of them, and pitched me over his head, landing me on my nose on the top of a mossy rock; but the rock was sure hard under the mossy covering.

On another occasion a big tree of the forest fell without warning within ten feet of me while setting traps one morning. But the worst calamity of all is the fact that all my tobacco supply is mouldy and unfit for human consumption. The balance of the party consider this a small matter, however, compared to the shortage of butter and maple syrup, as the hot cakes seem rather dry unadorned.

Haven't seen a newspaper or heard any gossip for over a month.

George G. Cantwell.

A Mid-Morning at Barron.

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This morning I saw, on a warm, logged-off hillside, a Hummingbird, perched with all the dignity of a statue, on a small snag projecting from a stump a thousand times too big for his pedestal, a little farther up a Sooty Grouse in similar position, both facing the breeze and sunbasking; the grouse crouching stolid and frozen in anxious care of her brood in the grass; the midget twitching his wings in important animation. A moment later, the Hummer, or another, was weaving and waving in harmonious rhythm with a breeze-tossed cluster of Indian Paintbrush. The Hummer was probably a young male Rufus, (probably, -- I love the word, it eases one's accuracy-demanding conscience; for how could one tell the all of an air-free Hummer, and why kill the lovely creature on such an early autumn morning?)

The air is gray-smoky. The far hills of the State Divide are soft and Payne's grayey, and still parched with snow. A mother grouse

is moaning a momentary crooning of anxious mountain mother solicitude, a Clarke Crow is talking hoarsely, two little Chips are alternately playing a chipmunk game of wrestle and wigwagging a caudal flaunt of suspicion at me, from the discard of a long-forgotten mine. Perhaps they are looking for "color." From their size and friendliness I should say they were minors.

August 16, 1920.

W. T. Shaw.

Bonita Camp, Slate Creek.

August 17, 1920.

The long, long trail has now brought this biological quartet to scenes somewhat less beautiful than they have passed. Slate creek at least offers variety, if not all of strictly biological interest. The mountain sides have to a great extent been devastated by forest fires. All along the creek and on the slopes mute evidences of former activities. The desolation resulted from the lure of gold. Like the Mountain Beaver, the Marmot and the Pocket Gopher, man has honeycombed the flowery slopes with his borings. Big rock dumps, ruined stamp-mills, their walls toppling and their machinery rusty, speak eloquently of fortune spent and hopes dissipated. But "hope springs eternal," and there are here and there still a few miners pounding their drills and shooting their blasts. However, the Pack Rats and Deer mice have succeeded most of them as tenants of the old log cabins. The August sun pours its rays on an open country, and the sweep of the cold night winds is unobstructed. As the summer haze thickens the more distant scenery is reaching the fade-away stage.

Still if Microtus and Arvicoloides will accept our baits, and Sciurus and Callospermophilus obligingly come to bag; if there are sufficient fauna and flora to keep the biologists busy, why worry?

Speaking of the Pack Rat (Neotoma cinerea occidentalis), it may be worthy of note that, whereas he was a rare rodent in the earlier stages of our journey, he is almost omnipresent in the Ruby and Slate Creek region.

I had rather an interesting encounter with one of these rats the other day - or perhaps it was the rat that had the encounter with me. In prowling about the second story of an old building at the Mammoth mining camp I suddenly came upon a mother rat in her nest engaged in the occupation of nursing her litter of little rats, nestled in their nest. They were a hungry lot if we can judge by the tenacity with which they adhered to the source of their nourishment. The old rat, alarmed at my appearance, leaped upon an old bed rail a foot above the floor. The baby rats went along with her, dangling like grapes from a stem. Their eyes were not yet open, and they were perhaps a little less in size than an adult Peromyscus. I halted and stood motionless. The rat also paused. I began whistling in a low, friendly tone, which seemed to soothe the fears of the animal, and shortly she dropped to the floor and by stages returned to the nest. Very slowly I approached her and gently touched her side with my collecting pistol. She made no effort to evade the touch, and presently I was poking her about from one side of the nest to the other to get a better view of and to count the little ones. She showed a trifle of impatience at my impertinence, but no fear. Once or twice she nipped at the pistol but did not shrink from its touch. Finally I pushed her entirely over on her back and counted the little ones, which of course, were attached well to the rear of the abdomen. This seemed rather too much, and

she retreated about a foot to a position behind a bed-post. She looked out at me and petulently stamped her foot at frequent intervals. At least that is the way I interpreted the snappy noise she made.

The nest roughly resembled a bird's nest in shape, being about a foot in external diameter and fully six inches in internal and about three inches deep. It was constructed of rather fine shreds of gunny-sacking, cloth and a little paper. It was placed on the floor against the wall with no attempt at concealment, more than was afforded by the outside framework of an old bedstead. There was some litter on the floor about the nest, and in another corner of the room there was a second nest of similar construction unoccupied at the time. At no time was any one of the four little rats detached from the parent. I left them hoping that some of our party might find the opportunity of photographing them, but we failed in that.

J. M. Edson.

Water Bird Notes

By Stanton Warburton, Jr.

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The following notes were made while a guest of Mr. Arthur H. Rust on his yacht, the "Lady Helen." The writer is very much indebted to Mr. Rust for all the trouble he has gone to in order that these notes might be made. Several times he was kind enough to change his course or stop his boat in order that birds might be observed or collected.

On Aug. 10, 1920, a few Shearwaters were seen around Point Wilson from Port Townsend, Jefferson Co., Wn. These were most likely the Sooty Shearwater (Puffinus griseus), as on the following day three birds collected at this place all proved to be the Sooty Shearwater. While netting a wounded bird, I had an excellent opportunity of observing how they swim when under water. The bird went nearly straight down almost out of sight in clear water, using his wings fully extended as his chief method of propelling, but seemed unable to remain under for any length of time or to go very far. On Aug. 12th, when going from Port Townsend to Victoria, B.C., about the same number (about 50 birds) were seen at the same place, but none beyond this vicinity. On Aug. 17th, when returning from Victoria, Shearwaters were common all the way from Victoria to Port Townsend. Several flocks were seen in numbers of 30 to 50. About 10 miles from Port Townsend, we ran into flocks of small dark-colored Shearwaters, which I think were the Slender-billed Shearwaters, but as the water was rough it was impossible to collect any. To make sure I was not fooling myself about the size of these birds, I asked other members of the party if they could see any difference between the size of these birds and the Sooty Shearwaters we had been watching, and they all agreed with me that they were much smaller.

On Aug. 17 several Heerman Gulls (Larus heermanni) were seen from Port Townsend south to Foulweather Bluff (the entrance to Hoods Canal).

I have three notes on Phalaropes, though none were collected. Most likely they were all the Northern Phalarope (Lophipes lobatus). A flock of over 12 were seen off Pt. Wilson on Aug. 10 at the same place where the Sooty Shearwaters were seen. Two were seen in the West Passage about 15 miles from Tacoma on Aug. 18. The last one seen was on Sept. 12 in the West Passage, but about 5 miles nearer Tacoma than the pair seen on Aug. 18.

Two Jaegers were seen in the West Passage on Sept. 12. They were probably the Parasitic Jaeger (Stercorarius parasiticus).